

The Romulus News

APRIL 12, 1996 – APRIL 25, 1996

"the little paper"

VOLUME 9 NUMBER 19

Romulus Students' Production of *Annie* Is Sure To Warm Your Heart, Rain or Shine



Kevin Campbell will portray "Daddy Warbucks"

month at *Annie*, the musical – scheduled for production at Romulus High School on April 25, 26, and 27. The curtain will go up at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday and Friday; Saturday's matinee will begin at 2 p.m. Tickets are reasonably priced at \$6 each (\$5 each for students or senior citizens), and will be available for purchase at the High School box office.

Playing the role of *Annie's* title character – an unstoppable, optimistic orphan – will be Romulus Middle School eighth-grader Heather Heughens. This precocious 13-year-old's natural talent for acting is enhanced by her outgoing personality and empathy for others.

"I like to express feelings in a different way," explained Heather. "Acting lets me take on and experience other people's problems – and then leave them behind."

Another special actor among the 25+ students who are members of the cast is Stephanie Gurner, who will play the part of Molly, the youngest orphan. The nine-year-old fourth-grader from

Halecreek Elementary has been in dance since she was six and has participated in two of her school's talent shows.

"I have never been in a play before," Stephanie said, "but, when I tried out, I just thought about what it would be like to not have Mom and Dad."

Directing the production of *Annie* is Gary Sturm, whose experience in the field includes directing at Northville's Marquis Theatre and at Northville High School. In working with his group of inexperienced but enthusiastic young thespians, Sturm has displayed the patience of Job, and Judith Thompson, vocal and dance instructor for Romulus Schools, says that the group is very lucky to have the benefit of his professional directing services.

Sturm's acting credits include the role of *Annie's* "Daddy Warbucks" for Nancy Gerwin Productions and of "Ben" in *Little Foxes* at Greenfield Village.

Advertisements in the production's program book are available at very modest fees to encourage community



Heather Heughens will perform the role of "Annie"

support of the play. For further information concerning ad sizes and prices, please call Ms. Thompson at the High School (941-2170) or Mrs. Lindquist (941-9382). □



Vocal/dance instructor Judith Thompson (right) and members of the chorus



(From left) Ashley Slone, Ryan Sergott, Melissa Lindquist, Della Hamby, Sarah Weinschenk, and Stephanie Gurner will be orphans

Guest Commentary

Officials Should Pick Up Tab for Speeches

by Congresswoman Lynn N. Rivers

If you've ever channel surfed on cable TV, chances are you've had the opportunity to watch special order speeches broadcast on C-SPAN. Special order speeches are essentially an after-hours platform for members of the U.S. House of Representatives – a time when members can air our views and address in detail any issue that we believe is of concern to our constituents. During special order sessions, members can reserve time on the House floor to speak, and C-SPAN will provide coverage free of charge.

Free of charge to members, that is. Recently, several constituents asked me how much it cost to hold a special order session and who was paying for it. I was shocked to discover that this congressional "public service" actually costs taxpayers an estimated \$5000–\$7000 per hour: some 75 to 100 congressional employees have to work overtime to keep the House open and transcribe the speeches. In 1995 alone, the total bill for special orders came to an estimated \$2,000,000 – outlays above and beyond the \$800,000 Representational Allowance that each member of Congress already receives to manage their offices and communicate with constituents, courtesy of the taxpayers.

Where I come from, two million dollars is a lot of money. As a Congresswoman dedicated to government ethics and reform, I believe that my colleagues and I have a responsibility to pick up the tab for this luxury; that we must put our money where our mouths are, so to speak.

And so I have introduced legislation, H.R. 263, to require members of Congress to pay for special order speeches out of our own Representational Allowances. These sums are more than enough to subsidize our own televised speeches. While an hour of time

on C-SPAN may cost \$5000–\$7000, five minutes may cost less than \$600, a price that any of us can certainly afford. As it is, we already receive one free minute of televised speech each day before a session convenes. And, as it is, I returned \$250,000 from my own '95 Representational Allowance to the U.S. Treasury. Eight hundred thousand dollars is more than enough for members to cover the operating costs of our offices and still pay for C-SPAN time each week, if we want.

Opponents of my bill argue that it is an attempt to regulate speech and that it will hinder elected officials in communicating with our constituents. However, H.R. 263 does not in any way attempt to curtail, dictate, or censor what is said in special orders. It simply states that members must pay for our televised speeches using our office allowances – the same way we use our allowances to pay for particular mailings, telephone calls, radio recording sessions, TV taping services, and other methods of communications.

I believe strongly that the free exchange of ideas and an ongoing dialogue with the public is crucial to our democracy. At the same time, however, when the public trust in government is at an all-time low and government expenditures are high, I also believe it's reasonable to ask members of Congress to watch our own budgets the way most other Americans do. Free speech and government accountability should not be mutually exclusive. Congress has to make it clear to the people we serve that when we spend taxpayers' money, we do it as responsibly and carefully as possible.

As for what we say, that choice is – and must always remain – ours. However, if there's one thing I know that all our constituents would like to hear, it's that we're cheap with the public buck. □

The Romulus News

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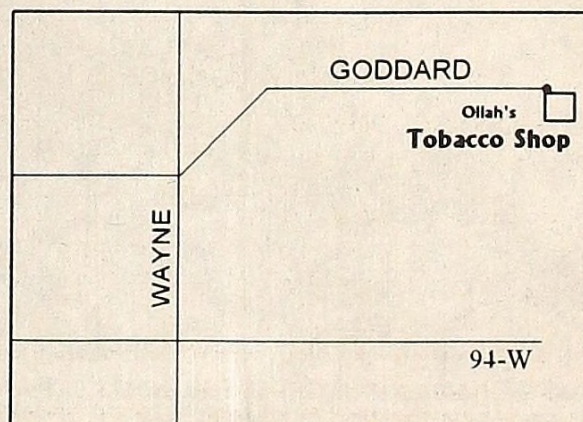
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ATTENTION, CITIZENS OF ROMULUS AND TAYLOR:



Are you interested in participating in discussions about a Deep-injection Well in the City of Romulus? A Citizen's Committee is being formed for the purpose of examining and resolving issues surrounding this important project.

Volunteers are being sought to serve on this committee and will have a chance to speak with various experts in the field of liquid-waste disposal as well as representatives from the appropriate government agencies.

To volunteer as a committee member, please complete the coupon below and mail to: Marge Byington, P.O. Box 74038, Romulus, MI 48174-0038, by April 18, 1996.

- ☐ Yes. I am interested in serving on the Citizen's Committee for the Deep-injection Well in Romulus.
- ☐ Please add my name to your mailing list to receive information concerning the Deep-injection Well Project.

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Address _____

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Telephone No. (daytime) _____
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Please indicate particular area(s) of interest:

- ☐ Location of the Deep-injection Well
- ☐ Waste-disposal Technology
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- ☐ Other: _____

Letters to the Editor

Editor's note: All letters to the editor must contain the writer's signature and a telephone number where he/she can be reached in order to verify the letter's authenticity. Names will be withheld by request if, in our opinion, the letter's content merits anonymity.

The Romulus News reserves the right to edit all letters for clarity and, if necessary, brevity.

Resident Asks for "Next Best Thing"

To the Editor:

As you know, many Romulus residents have long been concerned about the possible financial consequences of the ongoing legal battle between the City of Romulus and Environmental Disposal Systems, Inc. (EDS). This concern has led some of us to make periodic requests for a *straightforward* report from the City Council and the City attorneys – one which would provide residents with a *realistic* assessment of the City's chances of winning and/or the burden that taxpayers will have to bear if we lose.

Unfortunately, Council continues to stonewall such requests, using the catchphrase, "We cannot comment on that subject because of pending litigation," to hide the details of what many of us suspect is an extremely weak case. They seem to be bent upon furthering their own political agendas at the expense of the community overall.

Because no straight answer seems to be forthcoming from our current attorneys, I would like you to reprint "the next best thing" – namely, a letter from *former* Romulus City attorney Peter O'Rourke on the subject of the deep-well litigation. This letter originally appeared in the March 3, 1995 edition of *The Romulus News*.

Thank-you in advance for your consideration toward "the other half" of our city's residents.

Dorothy Nesler

"Has Common Sense Died?" Asks Attorney

(Editor's note: The following letter is the reprint requested by Ms. Nesler.)

Has common sense died in the City of Romulus?

It is with dismay that I read of the ongoing turmoil regarding the operation of the EDS and REMUS joint venture deep well located in Romulus.

My involvement with Romulus goes way back to the "township days," having served as a township attorney, and then as a city attorney for many years. While I haven't been actively involved for about eight years, I have kept my eye on the City activities.

For the most part, good common sense and sound judgment have prevailed over the years. But now? Let's take a look. It appears that these are the facts:

- It was proposed to the City that a safe well, MDNR- and USEPA-approved, be constructed in Romulus at a location which would be suitable.
- The City welcomed the construction of the well, and the selected site.
- The City attorney stated (three times in writing) that the City could not obstruct construction of the well. The city gave copies to EDS, giving EDS a right to rely on the opinions.
- The well was constructed – at enormous cost to EDS and REMUS – with all required safeguards.
- The City administration changed its mind about the well after it had already been drilled.
- Extensive litigation has now ensued, with more almost certain to follow, particularly a taking claim that would follow a ruling against REMUS by the City's Zoning Board of Appeals.

Can Romulus win? My review of the facts, research of the applicable law, and 37 years of legal experience say NO! The City may win an occasional motion in a court hearing. It may even eventually prevail on some important issues. Does that mean that the City wins? And, what is the cost to the taxpayers?

Even if the City ultimately wins each lawsuit to prevent the well operation at its present site, its past actions in welcoming the well will likely subject the City to huge costs under a condemnation-related legal theory. I do not believe that the City will win such lawsuits.

If the City ultimately loses such lawsuits, its financial exposure includes huge damages for lost profits, and litigation-related costs and fees. Plus, the well stays where it is.

In either case, legal fees and litigation costs, now in the half-million-dollar range, could and will likely cost millions of taxpayer dollars with no recoupment by the City. There is only one source for these funds. The Romulus taxpayers have already said "NO" in a referendum vote.

Can the matter be resolved in a manner which is fair to the City, its taxpayers, and the well owners? YES! The interested parties can sit down together and reasonably determine what are the valid citizen concerns, valid City interests, and the needs of the well owners. That is what a court is eventually going to do if the interested parties don't. If it goes that far, no one wins.

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Community Calendar

- **Registration Drive at St. Aloysius** – St. Aloysius Catholic School (located at 37200 Neville Road, near I-275 and I-94, in Romulus) is accepting registrations for the 1996–1997 school year. A full curriculum is offered for grades K–8. All teachers are State-certified. For more information, please call the School: 941-3340.
- **Parenting Class** – The Oakwood Healthcare System's Community-focused Health Promotion Network is offering an "Active Parenting Today" class for parents of children ages two to 12. Topics covered will include: instilling courage and self-esteem, understanding your child's thinking; creating cooperative kids; solving problems together; and making responsibility a reality. The six-session course will meet at the Oakwood Hospital Beyer Center–Ypsilanti (135 South Prospect) on Saturday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. beginning April 13 and continuing through May 18. Cost is \$45 (both parents may attend for this price if they share materials). Classes are limited; preregistration is required. Call 1-800-543-WELL.
- **Coming Up at St. Paul's** – St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church (corner of Ellis and Craig streets, New Boston) will host a Blood Drive on Monday, April 15, from 2 to 8 p.m.; and a giant two-day Rummage Sale, set for Friday, April 19, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Saturday ("Bag Day"), April 20, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information, please call the Church (753-9048).
- **Workplace Violence Seminar** – The subject of "Violence in the Workplace" will be addressed at an Oakwood Occupational Healthcare Network seminar, set for Wednesday, April 17, at Oakwood Support Services (4420 Venoy, Wayne). Topics will include "assessing and preventing violence," "identifying appropriate ways to decrease the risk for violence," and "profile of a potential perpetrator." Registration and continental breakfast (included in the \$10 registration fee) will begin at 8 a.m.; the program will follow from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. For more information, or to register, call 467-4003.
- **The Hunchback of Notre Dame** – The Huron Civic Theatre (32044 Huron River Drive, in New Boston) will present *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, on Friday, May 3 and 10, at 8 p.m.; Saturday, May 4 and 11, at 8 p.m.; and Sunday, May 5 and 12, at 3 p.m. Tickets (\$9 for adults; \$8 for senior citizens and students) are available at the Box Office; call 782-5380.
- **Writer Support Group** – Writers Anonymous, a newly formed writer support group encompassing all ages and interests, will meet at the Romulus Public Library (11121 South Wayne Road) on the first and third Monday of each month from 6:30 to 8 p.m. The group's objective is to give honest, constructive criticism and encouragement to its members. For information, call the Library at 942-7589.
- **Romulus Little League Meetings** – The Romulus Little League Board of Directors invites the public to attend its twice-monthly meetings, held at 7 p.m. every second and fourth Monday at the Romulus Recreation Department (36515 Bibbins).
- **Premarital Counseling Classes** – Oakwood Hospital Heritage Center–Taylor, in cooperation with the Taylor Teen Health Center, offers premarital counseling classes that fulfill the State of Michigan marriage license requirement. Participants receive information on sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS, and prenatal care from a qualified health educator. Classes are offered on the second Tuesday of each month from 7 to 8 p.m. at 10000 Telegraph, Taylor. Cost is \$25 for couples; \$15 for individuals. For more information, or to preregister, call 374-2273.

To place information in the Community Calendar, mail it to "the little paper" at P.O. Box 74038, Romulus, MI 48174-0038; FAX it to us at 941-4874; or call 941-1907 or 941-3113

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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What is needed is the application of good, old-fashioned Romulus problem-solving common sense. Further delay could be devastating.

Very truly yours,
 Peter E. O'Rourke

Resident Asks Mayor To "Fight the Good Fight"

This is to Mayor Oakley:

I want to propose a committee to you, in order to promote healing for the City of Romulus.

Like I said at the April 1 Council meeting, even though I didn't vote for you, *you are my mayor!* And, because you campaigned against the well last fall before the general election, you represent me in my fight against the well. You also represent every other RECAP (Romulus Environmentalists Care About People) member in their fight against the well; and, regardless of whether they voted for you or not, *you are their mayor, also!*

And, since you did campaign against the well, you must have a list of, or knowledge of, your own anti-well people.

So, why don't we form a committee: *you, your anti-well people, and the RECAP anti-well people!*

Mayor Oakley, as Mayor of the City of Romulus, you – literally – by City Charter, owe your allegiance to the residents and taxpayers of Romulus, and not to EDS, or EDS' Public Relations person, Marge Byington.

We Romulus residents and Romulus taxpayers pay your salary, and you must answer to us, and not to EDS or Marge Byington.

You made your anti-well campaign promises before the general election, to the residents and taxpayers of Romulus, and not to EDS or Marge Byington.

So, what I propose to you is for all anti-well people to join forces, and *begin* to "Fight the Good Fight," just as Mayor Priebe and the anti-well residents of Taylor have done! The City officials of Romulus should be sending out anti-well mailings to the residents of Romulus. And, Mayor Oakley, you should be sending a letter out to Governor John Engler, stating your reasons for being against the well, just as Mayor Priebe has already done. (I gave you, Mayor, and all Council members a copy of that letter last Monday night.) By the way, Mayor Oakley, *just what are the reasons you are against EDS' hazardous/nonhazardous commercial injection wells?* I've never heard you give any reasons, and I've never seen these said reasons in print.

Mayor Oakley, when you said these words at last Monday night's meeting – "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands (as Mayor,

your republic is the City of Romulus) . . . one nation (one city) . . . under God, indivisible (don't let an outside force, EDS, divide our city) . . . with liberty (not coercion for a "lawsuit-happy company?") . . . and justice (not the racial injustice that exists at the Wahrman-site well, which is in an area comprised of 84% African Americans) . . . for all (for all residents and taxpayers of Romulus, regardless of race, creed, political ties, economic status, etc.) – *you pledged your allegiance to us, and not to EDS or Marge Byington!*

Mayor Oakley, you are our mayor!
 Please, let's form *our own committee*, and *bring Romulus together again!*

Sincerely,
 Sandra Yerman

DECAP Group Addresses Criticism

To the Editor:

It is clear that the new legislation introduced by Representative Pitoniak and Senator Bennett will not stop development of commercial hazardous injection wells in Michigan. It is also clear that EDS (Environmental Disposal Systems) intends to proceed with development of their new site located in Romulus and near Taylor.

DECAP (Downriver Environmentalists Care About People) members have been criticized by various Romulus residents for telling the Romulus City Council that Romulus will lose the lawsuit against EDS. Mr. Randolph Gear, Chairman of the Romulus City Council, accused the DECAP members of being "brainwashed" by EDS and said that EDS is trying to "divide and conquer."

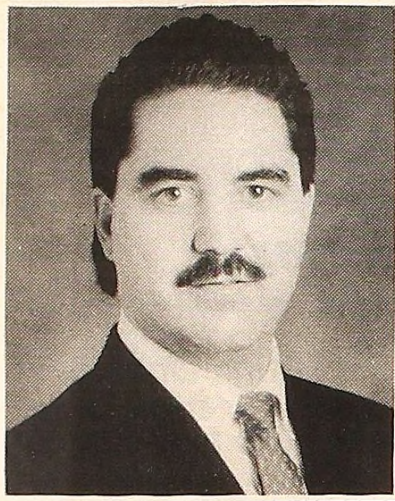
Mr. Gear is very wrong for making these statements. DECAP members believe Romulus is fighting a losing battle against EDS, and we are concerned that Romulus simply doesn't care about Taylor and so is trying to push EDS to develop a well site close to Taylor.

DECAP members also know that they have been lied to by various people involved in fighting the well, including some Romulus officials. These lies and other efforts to mislead were done in an effort to get DECAP members to blindly assist Romulus.

What is even more disturbing is that it appears that the Romulus City Council is afraid to tell Romulus residents that they are being put at great financial risk as a result of Romulus' lawsuit against EDS.

Since Romulus has shown that it does not care about Taylor, DECAP members in Taylor are planning to push Taylor to work with EDS in order to obtain monitoring ability, controls over project operational issues, participation through a Citizen's Information Committee, control over hours of operation

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I would like to extend a sincere thank-you to the friends and supporters who attended my fund-raiser on March 14th.

Your continued good wishes will be important to me as I pursue my goal of serving our community as Judge of the 34th District Court.

Thanks Again!

Brian A. Oakley

Candidate for Judge
34th District Court

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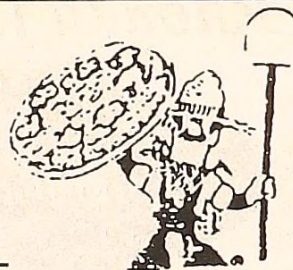
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Assessment Notices Leave Property-owners Confused

By Kristi Stephens

When the City of Romulus sent out its 1996 assessment notices last February, confusion among many property owners led to a flood of calls to the Assessment Department.

Frequently, the confusion stemmed from misunderstandings about the changes in assessment procedures and reporting that took effect last year after the passage of Proposal A (in March of 1994).

"I voted for Proposal A because I thought it promised to cap property assessments," said one Romulus homeowner, who was bewildered by the fact that his assessment notice appeared to report several different values for the same house — and upset that all of them represented a significant increase over last year's assessment. "I feel like the government has pulled off another one of its scams."

Actually, says Allen Dennett of the Romulus City Assessor's Office, Proposal A *did* create a "cap" on assessment, but that cap does not take the form of an absolute "freeze"; rather, it is a mandate which insures that, each year, the taxable portion of your property's value cannot increase more than the amount of the consumer price index (CPI) or five percent — whichever is less. This guaranteed limitation on the taxable value of your property will continue until ownership of the property is transferred. (More on that later.)

Here's a brief outline of the process used to assess a home's taxable value (assuming no changes in structure or ownership).

To begin with, the City Assessor establishes a new "fair market value" for every home each year. This figure, Dennett stresses, is *not* arrived at in some arbitrary manner; rather, it takes into account a number of factors, primarily the selling price of all similar homes sold in the area over the course of the past 24 months.

The Assessor then uses this fair market value to calculate three other figures: the home's State Equalized Value (SEV), its capped value, and its taxable value. A home's SEV is exactly one-half, or 50%, of its fair market value. The capped value is determined by multiplying the previous year's taxable value by either the CPI (which, for this year, is 1.028) or five percent, whichever is less. The smaller of the SEV and the capped value will be the figure used for the home's taxable value.

For example: Suppose that, in 1995, your home had a taxable value of \$28,000; and that recent sales of comparable homes in your neighborhood show that your home's current fair market value is \$60,000. Further, suppose

that the current CPI is 1.028. To figure your home's taxable value for 1996, first determine its SEV (\$60,000 x .50, or \$30,000), then calculate its capped value (\$28,000 x 1.028, or \$28,784). Since the smaller of the two figures is the capped value of \$28,784, that would also be your home's taxable value for 1996.

Or take the following instance (which would occur in areas where property values have increased by only a tiny margin or have actually decreased): Suppose that, in 1995, your home had a taxable value of \$28,000; and that recent sales of comparable homes in your neighborhood show that your home's current fair market value is \$55,000. Further, suppose that the current CPI is 1.028. First, determine your home's SEV (\$55,000 x .50, or \$27,500), then calculate its capped value (\$28,000 x 1.028, or \$28,784). Since the smaller of the two figures is the SEV of \$27,500, that would also be your home's taxable value for 1996.

Calculating the taxable value of homes which have been improved in the past year (by the construction of an addition or a garage, for example) is a little different, since, *for the first year*, any improvement's current fair market value must be accounted for in both the SEV and capped-value calculations. For example, assume that all the data in the first example is the same, except that, in the past year, you have also added a garage, worth \$7,000, to your property. To figure your home's taxable value for 1996, first determine its SEV [(\$60,000 x .50) + (\$7,000 x .50), or \$33,500], then calculate its capped value [(\$28,000 x 1.028) + (\$7,000 x .50), or \$32,284]. Since the smaller of the two figures is the capped value of \$32,284, that would also be your home's taxable value for 1996.

The rules for figuring the taxable value on a home purchased in the past year are also a little different, since, *for the first year only*, transfer of ownership nullifies any capping protections enjoyed by the previous owner, and establishes a new taxable value exactly equal to the home's current SEV. For example, suppose that you, as a new homeowner, learn that sales of comparable houses in your neighborhood show that your home's current fair market value is \$60,000. Since your SEV would be \$30,000 (\$60,000 x .50), your taxable value would also be \$30,000.

Dennett says that pamphlets which further explain the assessment process are available from his office at City Hall (11111 South Wayne Road, Romulus), and may be picked up any weekday (except holidays) between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. □

Black History Month Brought Out the Best in Local Students



These three young ladies have definite plans for making an impact on black history.

Three RHS Juniors Among Top 20 In Essay Contest

Three juniors from Romulus High School were among the top 20 finalists in a "Black History Makers of Tomorrow" essay contest sponsored by the McDonald's restaurants of Southeast Michigan. From Ann Arbor to Warren, West Bloomfield to Taylor, 110 high-school juniors participated, including students from schools such as Detroit Country Day, Cranbrook, and Dominican High. It is interesting to note that Romulus had more finalists than any other school.

The three students from Romulus are Yolanda Buffington, age 17, daughter of Oliver and Karen Buffington; Ameerah Khalifa, age 16, daughter of Hafeeza Khalifa; and Ebony Sandusky, age 17, daughter of Elizabeth Sandusky.

"These young ladies enjoy writing and have taken it to an advanced level," said Creative Writing instructor Ron Bayes, who has helped all three develop their skills and talent. "Both the school district and the Romulus community should be extremely proud of their accomplishments."

Black History Makers of Tomorrow is an annual essay contest celebrating Black History Month. Each applicant is asked to write an essay on the topic, "How I Plan To Impact Black History." Students are also judged on academics, community service, and one recommendation letter from a person in their community. The top prize was \$500 in McDonald's stock.

All applicants were invited to attend a luncheon in the beautiful Athenium Hotel on February 28, where the top 20 finalists and final five winners were honored.

Merriman Celebrates Black History Month

By Rosemary Foster

Pictures and biographies of famous black Americans decorated the entrance of Merriman Elementary during February in honor of Black History Month. But the tribute went beyond the static dis-

play in the hall and showcase when a special program was presented to the entire student body on February 15.

The opening address for the program – with its theme of "Celebrate the Hero in You" – was given by Laura Smith, a second-grade teacher. She spoke about the heroes of the Civil Rights movement and the contributions that both blacks and whites had made in addressing the issues of discrimination and racism. She also challenged everyone present "to celebrate each others' differences – but, more importantly, to notice how much we are all alike."

The guest speaker, Dr. Lionel F. Swan, was introduced by his daughter, Merriman principal Andrea Williams, who presented a brief summary of her father's many accomplishments in community service, the medical profession, and as a Civil Rights activist. She also noted that her father has been honored by many civic, medical, and educational organizations, including the Michigan Senate, Detroit Urban League, Detroit City Council, Michigan Medical Association, Howard University School of Medicine, and the Detroit branch of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People).

In Dr. Swan's speech, he addressed the issue of why we celebrate Black History Month by stating that it is to correct one of the greatest mistakes made in American history: the institution of slavery. He encouraged his audience by informing them that they are the key to complete emancipation and complete integration in America. He elaborated on this belief by reminding the adults present that "if we as adults can teach our children and ourselves to regard every individual for what he is, what he does, his character, and otherwise, and not solely on the basis of his color, we will live up to the greatness that is America."

In his concluding remarks, Dr. Swan reminded the audience that there are

continued on page 7

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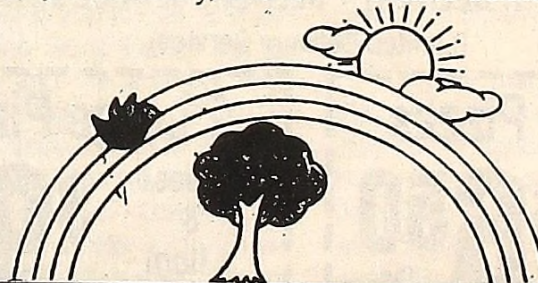
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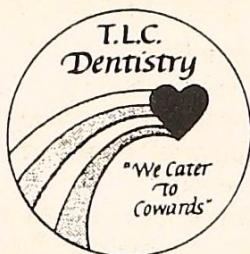
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only three Americans whose birthdays are celebrated as holidays – George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Martin Luther King. He admonished his audience to "celebrate Black History Week and Month until we have no need to celebrate it."

Following the speech, the fifth- and sixth-graders – under the direction of their teacher, Algertha Leonard – presented the play, *A Time to Walk*. The play included 11 vignettes of events that led up to Dr. King's initiation and support of the year-long boycott of the bus system in Montgomery, Alabama. Bruce Thompson portrayed Martin Luther King, Jr., in the drama, and the roles of Coretta and daughter Yoki were played, respectively, by Dominique Daniels and Dominique Love.

Following the performance, Danielle Boner, Brittany Wiltsie, and Carlos Kendricks, students from the third-grade class of teacher Nettie McDonald, each recited a poem that covered the topics of freedom and liberty, democracy, and dreams.

The Merriman Singers finished up the program with the song "Tomorrow," and sixth-grader Chris Freeman completed the musical part of the program with a rap song about freedom.

Closing remarks were made by physical-education teacher John Morgan. He informed the group that, during the month of February, there had been many programs and opportunities to learn more about the contributions that black men and women have made to help make this country the great nation that it is. He summarized his address by concluding that now is the time for all of us to get together and work as one to show that we are the greatest nation in the world.

Head Start Students Learn About Underground Railroad*By Lorie Beardsley*

During the last week of February, the students in the Van Buren Head Start program began learning about the Underground Railroad.

Although the Underground Railroad project was not originally part of planned Black History activities, it was easily incorporated into the month's schedule of events and continued into March.

The Underground Railroad project began when Tori Warlick, a teachers' assistant at Van Buren Head Start, found the idea in *Young Children*, a professional journal. Warlick shared the idea with her teacher Susan Hale, and the two then presented the idea at a diversity staff meeting. Because the idea was well received by the other teachers, Warlick was given permission to write requesting a Diversity Mini-Grant. Wayne County offers these mini-grants to schools for activities that promote diversity. On the day following Warlick's

request, Van Buren Head Start received the grant.

The faculty spent the third week in February planning for the re-creating of the Underground Railroad.

On Monday, February 26, a storyteller came to the center to introduce the students to the topic. For half an hour, the students listened to tales of kings and queens being brought to America to labor for the rich. The teachers participated by dressing in African attire.

After learning what a slave was and why they wanted to be free, the three-, four-, and five-year-old children learned about Harriet Tubman and her role in the Underground Railroad. They learned about the safe houses and how to identify them. And they learned some of the songs the slaves sang.

On Monday, March 4, the students began to "travel" the Underground Railroad. The students traveled class by class until all classes had made the journey. Those classes not traveling for the day represented different stations that the slaves would have passed through. They built fires, prepared food, and offered other assistance to the "slaves" as they made their journey to freedom.

On March 11, Susan Hale's class traveled. They also displayed the "Freedom Quilt" that her 17 children helped to make.

The final class traveled on March 14, bringing to an end the Underground Railroad project. From the teachers who worked extra hard to make the project exciting, to the parents who donated material for the quilt or helped in other ways, everyone found the project to be inspiring and informative.

Most importantly, it affected the children. "On the third week, they're still remembering things from the first week," Warlick said. □

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

continued from page 4

and trucking routes, and Royalties. Because Mayor Priebe and Mr. Pitoniak cannot guarantee that the new legislation and their political efforts will stop EDS' new site, we want to protect our city by having a contract with EDS that will guarantee us certain protections along with a royalty as compensation for the well being located close to our community.

In closing, Romulus residents should stop listening to the Romulus activists who like to hear themselves talk, call other people names, and lie – and should demand to hear what the City's attorneys recommend be done with the lawsuit filed against EDS, and specifically what the risks are to taxpayers financially.

Deep-well Committee Participation Urged

Letter to the Editor:

Environmental Disposal Systems, Inc. (EDS), is openly seeking interested residents from the area to serve on a Citizen's Review Committee that would review EDS' facility plans, safety procedures, contingency plans, and other aspects of our proposed deepwell project to provide comments and input that could make our project better and safer. This Committee would also be provided with all information pertinent to the project, including all agency correspondence and comments from other residents. Any interested resident should contact Austin Marshall or Dr. Rick Harding at (313) 955-2100 to express an interest in serving on this Committee.

Sincerely,
Austin Marshall
Vice President, EDS

Questioner Should Have Attended Meetings

Letter to the Editor:

Many of the questions and statements being made by Ms. Sandy Yerman could have been clarified if she were to

have attended public information meetings – held by Environmental Disposal Systems, Inc., in December of 1995 and January of 1996 – that were announced in *The Romulus News*.

Sincerely,
Austin Marshall
Vice President, EDS

Resident Says Collins Is Owned an Apology

To the Editor:

As a Romulus resident and taxpayer, I take great exception to councilman William Wadsworth's behavior at the March 25th Council meeting.

Mr. Wadsworth does not seem to be able to grasp the distinction between a union contract and a City policy applicable only to *nonunion* City employees. He has a perfect right to raise the issue as to whether Mrs. Collins' voting on the nonunion policy would be a conflict of interest. However, after a formal legal opinion had laid that question to rest, Mr. Wadsworth persisted with a vicious personal attack on Mrs. Collins, thus displaying his contempt for common decency as well as the legal process.

This kind of behavior is unacceptable. If Mr. Wadsworth does not make a public apology to Mrs. Collins, the Council should adopt a formal resolution censuring him for conduct unbecoming a public official, which brings the entire Council into disrepute. Condoning such actions is tacit approval of them.

Furthermore, this is a classic case of the pot calling the kettle black. Mrs. Collins is too much a lady to respond in kind. However, by copy of this letter, I am requesting the administration to obtain, and *make public*, a formal legal opinion as to whether or not Mr. Wadsworth has violated the City Charter or any City ordinances or State laws by his failure to abstain from voting on contracts between the City and his employer – the County of Wayne.

Respectfully,
Jim Rarey □

The Writer's Block

Local "Anonymous" Group Offers Members a "Writers Refuge"

By Lorie Beardsley

If someone ever told you, "That's really good. You should get it published," but you're not so sure, come to Writers Anonymous.

If you love to write and you never considered publishing your work, come to Writers Anonymous.

The name Writers Anonymous can be defined in two parts.

First, writers: some members have careers not related to writing; some have homes and families to care for; and some members balance both – yet they all take time to write.

Second, anonymous: this part of the name means that writers can receive honest, useful, and fair suggestions about their work. Passing out copies of one's work for others to look over at home and return at the next meeting allows for such privacy.

Writers Anonymous exists to offer encouragement and to provide incentive to keep writing.

Encouragement comes from being with people who understand the effort

involved in writing. Seeing others' work published, even in small publications, can be encouraging. And sharing one's work can be enlightening. Members find the environment to be "safe."

Incentive to keep writing: that is what members say they need. For this reason, a "writing assignment" was introduced. The Sixty Second Novel is a contest which a member discovered "on-line." Contrary to the title, the limit is on words rather than on time.

One word, such as "desire," is given as the topic for a 250-word "novel." From that one word, the results differ greatly, but the important thing is staying within the word limit. The writers read their mini-novels as well as those of the winners from the on-line contest. The word for the group's next meeting (set for April 15) is "remembering."

If you've never been to a Writers Anonymous meeting, but think you might have something to share with others who have similar interests, why not join us? See the "Community Calendar" on page 4 for dates and times. □

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CTF Looks To End Three-year Decline in Tax Donations

Ten years after beginning its State income tax checkoff, the Michigan Children's Trust Fund (CTF) is trying to reverse a three-year trend of dwindling contributions made through it — and last-minute tax-filers who choose to support the program could make an enormous difference. The situation is similar to those of other states, where donations to CTFs have declined over time.

Less funding means vital abuse- and neglect-prevention programs go unsupported, which costs taxpayers more in the long run. Child abuse and neglect cost Michigan taxpayers an average of \$850 million per year in medical treatment; legal, correctional and social-services costs; and educational and special education service provisions. The CTF's entire budget for fiscal 1995 was less than \$2 million.

The communities of Allen Park, Belleville, Brownstown Township, Canton Township, Dearborn, Dearborn Heights, Ecorse, Flat Rock, Garden City, Gibraltar, Grosse Ile, Huron Township, Inkster, Lincoln Park, Livonia, Melvindale, New Boston, Northville, Plymouth, River Rouge, Riverview, Rockwood, Romulus, Southgate, Sumpter Township, Taylor, Trenton, Van Buren Township, Wayne, Westland, Woodhaven, and Wyandotte all receive various parenting-support services from the Child Abuse Prevention Council of Out-Wayne County (CAPCo) which is a designated council of the CTF. CAPCo's mission is "to foster

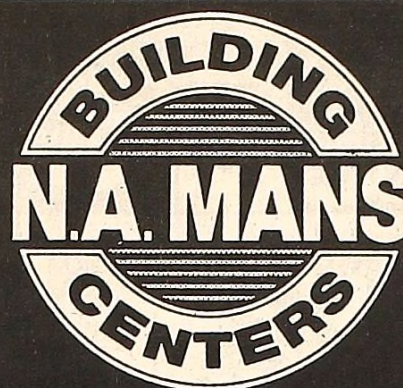
the nurturance and protection of children, to facilitate the development of their physical and emotional well-being, and to support and strengthen families." This is accomplished by providing parenting information and referrals, child abuse and neglect education and training, and many community awareness functions.

The income tax checkoff is CTF's principal funding source. Half the money goes into a trust fund to earn interest that will ensure a permanent funding source for local child-abuse prevention programs. Forty percent of proceeds are spent on such programs; 10% goes to administrative costs.

A record three percent of State taxpayers participated in the check-off during fiscal 1990-91, raising just under \$1 million. Even though a record 3,140,000 children were reported to child abuse and neglect nationally in 1994, the percentage of income tax checkoffs plummeted to 1.3% for fiscal 1994-95.

To donate through the checkoff, Michigan taxpayers can check the CTF box on their income-tax form to make a \$10 donation. Another option is to fill in the desired donations amount in the space provided on the document.

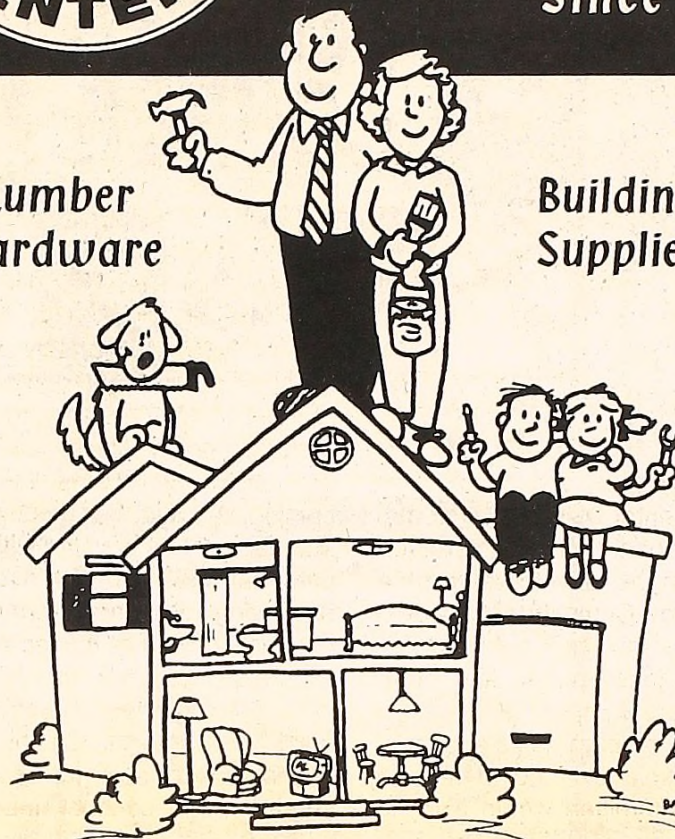
CTF and CAPCo are nonprofit agencies that sponsor programs to prevent child abuse and neglect. For more information about the tax check-off or making a donation, call CAPCo Executive Director, Sandra Murphy at (313) 721-5901. □



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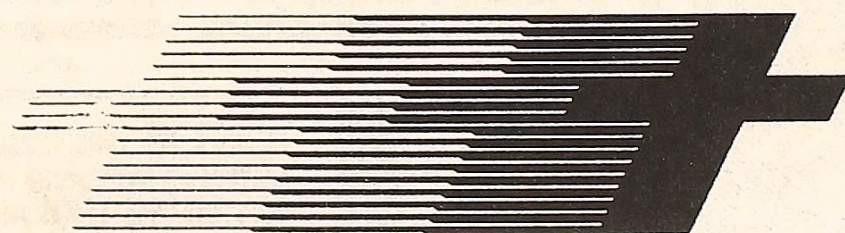
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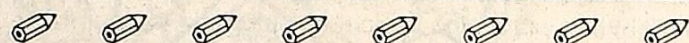
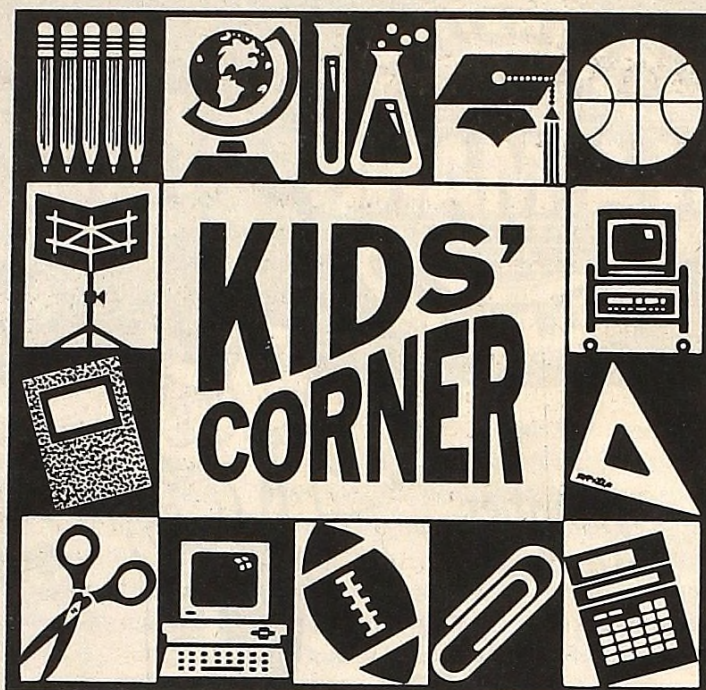


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WORD PAIRS

CAN YOU MAKE SIX NEW WORDS BY FORMING SIX PAIRS OF OBJECTS?



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4. FOOTBALL, 5. DOORBELL, 6. CARTON.

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How many words can you find?

There are at least 30 words that can be created within the word *showers*. How many can you find? Fill in the spaces below. A score of 20 is good; 25 is great; 30 or more is considered excellent.

S H O W E R S

- | | | |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 11. _____ | 21. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 12. _____ | 22. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 13. _____ | 23. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 14. _____ | 24. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 15. _____ | 25. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 16. _____ | 26. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 17. _____ | 27. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 18. _____ | 28. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 19. _____ | 29. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 20. _____ | 30. _____ |

Answers

1. He 2. Her 3. Hero 4. Hew 5. Ho 6. Hoe 7. Horse
8. Hose 9. How 10. Oh 11. Or 12. Ow 13. Owe
14. Roe 15. Rose 16. Row 17. Sew 18. She 19. Shew
20. Shoe 21. Shoer 22. Shore 23. Show 24. Shower
25. Shrew 26. Sore 27. Sow 28. We 29. Woe 30. Wore

April showers bring what?

April showers do bring May flowers, but showers also bring lightning. The most important thing to know about lightning is that when there is a lightning storm, you should never seek shelter under trees. Here are some other facts about lightning:

- Meteorologists estimate that lightning strikes the earth 100 times each second.
- Oaks are reported to be the tree most frequently struck by lightning, while Beech trees are reported to be the least.
- There can be 2,000 storms hitting the earth at the same time!
- A lightning stroke can travel up to 80,000 miles per second!
- During the Middle Ages, church bells would be rung to signal the approach of a major storm. Of course, bell ringing can be fatal in those high church steeples, and 103 bell ringers were killed in a 33-year period!

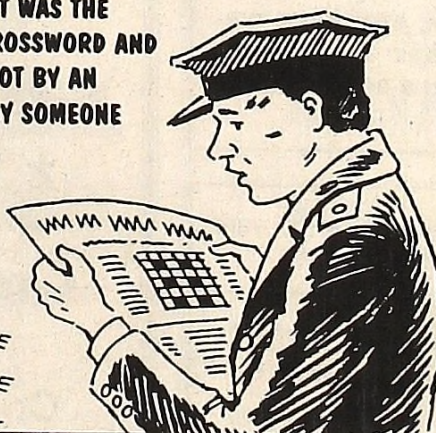
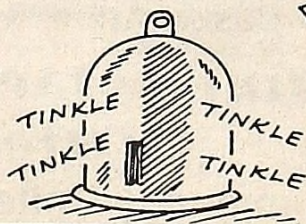


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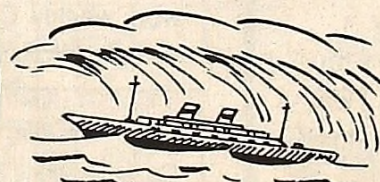
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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH - 11412 Delano St. / 941-0225

FRIENDSHIP COMMUNITY CHURCH - 19101 Inkster Rd. / Brownstown / 782-1220 / Sunday Morning Worship - 10 a.m. / Adult Bible Study and Sunday School - 11:30 a.m. / Nursery available / Active Drama Team

MARTIN TEMPLE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST - 6566 S. Wayne Rd. / 326-1270 / Elder Edward Thomas, Jr., Pastor / Sunday School - 10 a.m. / Sunday Worship - 12:00 p.m. / Sunday Evening Y.P.W.W. - 6:30 p.m. / Prayer and Bible Study - Tuesday, 7 p.m. / Friday Worship Service - 7 p.m.

MOUNT OLIVE BAPTIST CHURCH - 35565 Beverly Rd. / 729-2460 / James Thompson, Pastor / 531-1285 / Sunday School - 9:30 a.m. / Sunday Morning Worship - 11 a.m. / Wednesday Prayer Meeting - 6:30 p.m. / Wednesday Bible Study - 7 p.m.

NEW FAITH CHAPEL - 19498 Middlebelt Rd. / 783-1490 / Curt Swick, Pastor / 381-5630 / Sunday Morning Worship - 10:30 a.m. / Sunday Evening Worship - 6:00 p.m. / Wednesday Bible Study - 7:00 p.m.

PARKS MEMORIAL A.M.E. - 11547 Grover St. / 941-0771 / Rev. Jeffery Baker, Pastor / Sunday School - 9:45 a.m. / Sunday Morning Worship - 11 a.m. / Wednesday Bible Study - 6 p.m.

PENTECOSTAL MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH - 35625 Vinewood St. / 728-1390 / Rev. Arthur C. Willis, Pastor / 548-5954 / Sunday School - 10 a.m. / Sunday Morning Worship - 11:30 a.m. / Wednesday Bible Study - 6:30 p.m.

ROMULUS FREEWILL BAPTIST CHURCH - 9900 Tobine / 941-8810

ROMULUS WESLEYAN CHURCH - 37300 Goddard Rd. (5 Points) / 941-1511 / Rev. Donald McClellan, Pastor / 941-4167 / Enrichment Hour - 9:45 a.m. / Sunday Morning Worship - 10:45 a.m. / Sunday Evening Celebration - 6 p.m. / Family Night - Wednesday, 7 p.m.

SAINT ALOYSIUS CATHOLIC CHURCH - 11280 Ozga Rd. / 941-5056 / Daily Mass: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, & Friday - 9 a.m. / Communion Service on Thursday at 9 a.m. / Weekend Masses: Saturday - 6 p.m., Sunday - 9 a.m. & 11 a.m. / Holy Day Masses: 9 a.m., 12 Noon, & 7 p.m. / Vigil Mass (evening prior to Holy Day): 7 p.m. / Confessions: Saturday - 4:30 to 5 p.m.

SAINT CITY CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST - 7335 Washington / 595-0629 / Pastor: Elder James Lee Whitehead / Sunday School - 9:30 p.m. / Sunday Morning Worship - 10:45 a.m. / Sunday Evening Worship - 7 p.m. / Sunday Evening Radio Broadcast on WMUZ-FM 103.5 at 7:30 p.m. / Tuesday Evening Bible Study & Youth Night - 7 p.m. / Choir Rehearsal - Tuesday, 8:30 p.m. / Friday Evening Family Night - 7 p.m.

ST. PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH - 19109 Craig (Post Office 274), New Boston / Robert Allmann, Pastor / Sunday School, Adult Bible Class, & Confirmation Class - 9:00 a.m. / Sunday Morning Worship - 10 a.m. / Wednesday Worship - 7:30 p.m. / Organists: Mrs. Ruth Richert & Mr. Robert Walton / Attended Nursery

SALVATION ARMY - 33750 Goddard Rd. / 941-5100

SECOND MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH - 11242 Grover St. / 941-0330

STAR OF BETHLEHEM SPIRITUAL TEMPLE - 35143 Beverly Rd. / 326-4777

UNION GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH - 6312 Wayne Rd. / 721-5052

WAYNECOURSE CHURCH OF CHRIST - 7066 Waynecourse / 722-0454 / Earl Truss, Minister / 326-0918 / James Motley, Associate Minister: 561-3108 / Sunday Bible School - 10 a.m. / Sunday Morning Worship - 11 a.m. / Sunday Evening Worship - 6 p.m. / Wednesday Bible Study - 7 p.m.

If you would like to have your church listed in the church directory (there is no charge), or, if you have changes or additions in church information, please send it to:

*The Romulus News Church Directory
Post Office Box 74038 • Romulus, Michigan 48174-0038*

Sassy Seniors

By Mary E. Clark

Special thanks to Audry Moomaw, Manager of the Romulus Tower, and to Linda Norman, Senior Citizens Program Coordinator for the City of Romulus, for contributing information to this issue's "Sassy Seniors" column. (Note: For further information about events at the Senior Center, located at 36515 Bibbins, call 942-6852.)

Seminar To Kick Off Health Screens

A special medical team will discuss topics such as nutrition, preventative medicine, and resources available to senior citizens at a free seminar to be held in the Romulus Senior Center on April 26 at 1 p.m. The event has been planned as a sort of "kickoff" to a three-hour health screening which will be conducted at the Center by Annapolis Hospital on May 6 beginning at 1 p.m.

Among the free tests which will be offered to seniors who attend the screening will be "body composition" evaluations, PSA blood tests (which screen for prostate cancer), and checks on blood pressure, cholesterol, glucose, hearing, and vision/glaucoma. A "take-home/mail-in" kit to test for colon/rectal cancer will also be available.

Preregistration for both programs is preferred.

Potluck To Feature "Spring Hat and Tie" Contest

The special "Spring Hat and Tie" Fashion Show that will highlight this month's potluck luncheon (to be held at the Center on April 19) should be especially appropriate, considering the fact that the main dish served will be turkey and "dressing." Prizes will be awarded for the "most colorful," "funniest," and "most original" entries in both the "hat" and "tie" categories. (For more contest information, call Linda at 942-6852.)

Judging the event will be Mayor William Oakley; Rotary vice-president/president-elect and Recreation Commission member Chuck Shonta; and the Recreation Department's own Sheila Stewart. Local attorney Brian Oakley will serve as the master of ceremonies.

As always, seniors are invited to bring a dish and bring a friend.

Trip to Motown Museum

Youth and maturity will come together to explore their common interest in music on this "intergenerational" trip to the Motown Museum on May 10. Participants should bring a bag lunch; other refreshments will be provided. Trip is limited to the first 20 seniors to sign up; preregistration is required. Cost is \$3 per person.

Lunch with Seniors ... by Seniors ... for Seniors

Volunteers at the Romulus Senior Center invite the public to stop in at the Center between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. (while supplies last) on Friday, April 26, to enjoy a luncheon featuring a select menu of modestly priced soup, salad, and sandwich fare, as well as home-made rice pudding prepared and donated for sale by the Romulus House Restaurant. The new once-a-month program - besides providing a pleasant excuse to get together with old and new friends - is a fund-raising project for volunteer activities.

Special Trips

Seniors interested in more information about these or other special trips planned by the Romulus Senior Center should call Linda Norman at 942-6852.

- **Tulip Festival** - If beautiful blooms are your favorite part of spring, you won't want to miss this trip to the Tulip Festival in Holland, Michigan, to see Mother Nature's palette of colors at its best. The cost of this one-day trip, set for May 8 (departs at 8 a.m. and returns around 6 p.m.), is just \$46, and includes: round-trip motorcoach transportation; a stop at the Deklomp Wooden Shoe and Delph Factory; a tour of Holland (with a stop at Windmill Island) conducted by an authentically costumed guide; and lunch at a local restaurant.
- **"Cumberland Princess" Cruise** - Summer's sizzle will be here sooner than you think, and the Romulus Senior Center is already making its plans for trips that will make the most of it - like this three-day/two-night excursion which combines the excitement of Greyhound racing with the relaxation of a cruise along the beautiful Ohio River. The \$289 cost of the trip (based on double-occupancy rates), which departs July 17, includes: round-trip motorcoach transportation; two nights' lodging; dinner and an evening of racing fun at Tri-state Greyhound Park; and an all-day cruise (including lunch and dinner) aboard the "Princess."

Drop-In Program for Legal Counsel

Citizens age 50 and over are encouraged to take advantage of the Romulus Senior Center's new drop-in program for free legal advice and consultations courtesy of local attorney Brian Oakley. Each of the bimonthly sessions will be held from 3 to 5 p.m. The next scheduled program date is April 9 and April 23. □

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